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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/721,694	11/25/2003	William T. Ball	P06474US3	6303

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ZARLEY LAW FIRM P.L.C.
CAPITAL SQUARE
400 LOCUST, SUITE 200
DES MOINES, IA 50309-2350

EXAMINER

FETSUGA, ROBERT M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3751

DATE MAILED: 04/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/721,694

Applicant(s)

BALL, WILLIAM T.

Examiner

Robert M. Fetsuga

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3751

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11/25/03, 07/06/04, 06/27/05 & 03/03/06 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 03/17/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on March 03, 2006 has been entered.

2. The drawings are objected to because reference numeral "31" designates different elements in Fig. 3. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in

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the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

3. The amendment filed July 06, 2004 is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) because it introduces new matter into the disclosure. 35 U.S.C. 132(a) states that no amendment shall introduce new matter into the disclosure of the invention. The added material which is not supported by the original disclosure is as follows: The last sentence in the paragraph "beginning at page 4, line 16" (sic, line 5). This new matter was also resubmitted in the amendment filed June 27, 2005.

Applicant is required to cancel the new matter in the reply to this Office Action.

4. The amendment filed June 27, 2005 is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) because it introduces new matter into the disclosure. 35 U.S.C. 132(a) states that no amendment shall introduce new matter into the disclosure of the invention. The added material which is not supported by the original disclosure is as follows: The "flexible" limitation found on line 14 in the paragraph at "page 4, after line 26" (sic, line 20).

Applicant is required to cancel the new matter in the reply to this Office Action.

5. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

The claim recites "such that the cap is sealed against the overflow port". This subject matter is not found in the originally filed disclosure and is therefore considered to be new matter. In fact, the overflow port 30 being in the bathtub 18 end wall 24 does not even appear capable of being sealed by the disclosed cap assembly.

6. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claim is unclear as to whether the "bathtub" is intended to be part of the claimed combination since structure of the "overflow system" is defined as being connected thereto (ln. 3), but no positive structural antecedent basis therefor has been defined.

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7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claim 2, as best understood, is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a/b/e) as being anticipated by Minnick.

The Minnick reference discloses an overflow system comprising: a drain pipe 3 including a first threaded end 4; a bathtub 2 including an overflow port 7; and a cap assembly

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including a cap 5 having an opening 19 in a planar end 11, and a sealing member 16, as claimed. The drain pipe threads can be external (col. 3 lns. 20-22). The cap is considered to be "sealed against the overflow port" (via gasket 8).

9. Claim 2, as best understood, and considered drawn to the subcombination of the overflow system, is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Spahn.

The Spahn reference discloses a system comprising: a pipe 3 including a first threaded end (engaging 2); and a cap assembly including a cap 1 having an opening (at 5) in a planar end (Fig. 3), and a sealing member 6, as claimed. The cap is sealed against the pipe end (lns. 77-84) analogous to applicant's disclosed cap. The initial statement of intended use (overflow, bathtub), and all other functional implications related thereto, have been considered but do not appear to impose any patentably distinguishing structure over that disclosed by Spahn.

10. Claim 2, as best understood, is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oropallo et al. and Minnick.

The Oropallo et al. (Oropallo) reference (Fig. 13) discloses an overflow system comprising: a drain pipe 11 including a first threaded end 11a, 22; a bathtub 13 including an overflow port 12; and a cap assembly including a cap having a planar end (Fig. 13), and a sealing member 40. Therefore,

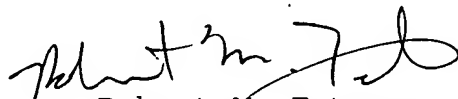
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Oropallo teaches all claimed elements except for the cap having an opening.

Although the cap of the Oropallo overflow system does not include an opening, as claimed, attention is directed to the Minnick reference which discloses an analogous overflow system which further includes a cap 5 having an opening 19. Therefore, in consideration of Minnick, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the overflow system art to associate an opening with the Oropallo cap in order to eliminate the need for cap removal subsequent to testing.

11. Applicant is referred to MPEP 714.02 and 608.01(o) in responding to this Office action.

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Robert M. Fetsuga at telephone number 571/272-4886 who can be most easily reached Monday through Thursday. The Office central fax number is 571/273-8300.



Robert M. Fetsuga
Primary Examiner
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